

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated November 3, 2005, having a shortened statutory period for response extended one-month set to expire on March 3, 2006. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-3, 7-20, and 23-26 remain pending in the application and are shown above. Claims 4-6, 21-22, and 27-57 have been cancelled by Applicants. Claims 1-26 are rejected by the Examiner. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for reasons presented below.

Election/Restrictions

Applicants' election with traverse of Group I & II, claims 1-26 are in the reply filed on August 10, 2005, is acknowledged. Applicant elects Groups I & II, with the prosecution of claims 1-26.

IDS

A supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was filed on June 9, 2005. This IDS has not been considered by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request consideration of this IDS.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Hawkins III* (6,752,044).

Regarding claims 1 and 15, the Examiner states "*Hawkins III* discloses a housing (30), a plurality of grippers (12&14), a frame (36), a plurality of grippers members (86&88&90) with pistons and cylinders, a plurality of torque distributors (82). However, *Hawkins III* has no torque distributors. *Hawkins III* discloses two piston assemblies for gripping the pipe and a gripping assembly 82 for simply guiding and positioning the

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pipe. *Hawkins III* states, a "gripping assembly 82 [which] does not move but is affixed in position to thereby act as a guide to position the pipe". (Col. 7, ln 57-58). As shown in Figure 3, the gripping assembly (82) holds a piston rod 100, however there is no torque distributor associated with the gripping assembly (82). Therefore, *Hawkins III* does not teach, show, or suggest each of the plurality of torque distributors has a contact surface and a load transfer surface, wherein the contact surface is adapted to contact an outer surface of the gripping members and the load transfer surface is adapted to transfer a force from the gripping members to an inner surface of the chamber as disclosed in amended claims 1 and 15 and claims 2, 3, 7-14, 16-20, 23-26, and 58-62 which depend therefrom. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 1-3, 7-14, 15-20, 23-26, and 58-62 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-12, 15-19, 21, and 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Buck* (4,649,777).

Regarding claims 1 and 15, the Examiner states *Buck* discloses a plurality of torque distributors (120). However, *Buck* simply discloses a cylinder guide not a torque distributor. Further, in *Buck* there is only one cylinder guide 120 for each body cavity 128. Therefore, *Hawkins III* does not teach, show, or suggest a plurality of torque distributors disposed in each of the chambers for engaging the plurality of gripping members, wherein each of the plurality of torque distributors has a contact surface and a load transfer surface, wherein the contact surface is adapted to contact an outer surface of the gripping members and the load transfer surface is adapted to transfer a force from the gripping members to an inner surface of the chamber as disclosed in amended claims 1 and 15 and claims 2, 3, 7-14, 16-20, 23-26, and 58-62 which depend therefrom. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 1-3, 7-14, 15-20, 23-26, and 58-62 are in condition for allowance.

New Claims

New claims 58-72 have been added to better define aspects of the current invention, no new subject matter has been added. Claims 58 and 59 depend from amended claim 1. As discussed above, Applicant submits that claim 1 is in condition for

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allowance and thus claims 58 and 59 are also in condition for allowance. Claims 60-62 depend from amended claim 15. As discussed above, Applicant submits that claim 15 is in condition for allowance and thus claims 60-62 are also in condition for allowance.

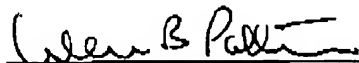
Applicant submits that the references cited by the Examiner neither alone nor in combination teach show or suggest preventing bending of the gripping members by transferring a torque load from the gripping members to the chamber through the load distributors as disclosed in new claim 63 and claims 64-72 which depend therefrom. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 63-72 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to Applicants' disclosure.

The references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed. Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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